

COASTAL WETLANDS INFORMATION AND DATA INTERNET REPOSITORIES THAT SUPPORT THE ONGOING SALT MARSH DIEBACK RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION

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We have always needed information to get our jobs done; however, when we are faced with a potential crisis situation, like the recent dieback of thousands of acres of coastal Louisiana salt marsh, managers and scientists must rapidly assess available datasets to help determine a reasonable course of action. Additionally, when the response effort involves such a large number of diverse shareholders, rapid data collection and dissemination are essential to reduce confusion and to help establish a cooperative effort. Through a concerted and cooperative effort, environmental information and data are expeditiously being made available to management groups and the public. The data are being made available in industry standard formats that allow the user to import the data into a variety of analysis and display tools. The following web sites have significantly contributed environmental datasets, historical summaries, or other products that have assisted in the ongoing brown marsh study.

The Breaux Act Web site, www.Lacoast.gov, contains information that relates directly to the restoration of coastal wetlands. The site also contains links mentioned in this abstract and many more. Recent additions to the site included digitized color-infrared aerial photographs, satellite information, delineated GIS data, and many recent fact sheets and presentations about the brown marsh phenomenon. The site is constantly being updated with new data and information. The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and the USGS Water Resources Division have partnered in the collection of real-time hydrology data in the brown marsh area. These data can be found at

www.savelawetlands.org/oldsite/spartina.htm or la.water.usgs.gov/hydrowatch.htm.

Along with real-time hydrological data, the Department of Natural Resources site, www.savelawetlands.org, also contains updated restoration monitoring reports in support of Breaux Act and other coastal restoration projects. The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) site, www.BTNEP.org, contains information about ecological management and other action plans currently being implemented in the Barataria-Terrebonne Basin. The NOAA–National Marine Fisheries Service has established a site, www.coastmarshgrass.org, dedicated to satellite classification of the impacted area.